

Daniel Malo
Student

**Testimony in Strong Support of SB 476:
An Act Concerning Non-violent Drug Offenses**
Judiciary Committee
March 19, 2010 Hearing

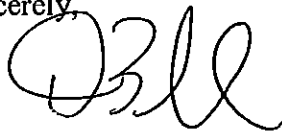
Thank you Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and other members of the Judiciary Committee for this opportunity to speak in support of **SB 476, AN ACT CONCERNING NON-VIOLENT DRUG OFFENSES**. This bill seeks to reduce costs to the state by reclassifying simple possession of cannabis and possession of paraphernalia as an infraction rather than misdemeanor offense.

I support this bill from a cost benefit and public safety standpoint; the overwhelming majority of cannabis arrests are for simple possession, focused mostly on targeting the end user and not the distribution network. The number of arrests for cannabis possession far exceeds the total number of arrests for all violent crimes combined, including murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. These are much more urgent matters requiring the time and manpower of our state and town police forces; costs further burden our municipalities after the arrests with court proceedings, incarceration, and efforts to enforce probation.

Savings accrued by such legislation would allow more funds to proven and effective awareness measures, as well as other preventative and rehabilitative services; a more appropriate method of dealing non-violent drug abusers.

Not only would SB 476 create a cost savings, it opens the possibility of a potential revenue stream, should the prevailing attitude come to accept this and other steps towards decriminalization. In today's fiscal climate, any cost savings or revenue generating legislation should be considered. I strongly support SB 476, and again thank the Judiciary Committee for the opportunity to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'DM' or 'D Malo', written in a cursive style.

Daniel Malo